

W2 (Week 1, Tuesday)

Comparatist approaches as theoretical method to explore civilisations?

Comparative, comparatist – and only
trouble?

HPAR4010

What makes civilisation?

Dr Katharina Zinn

At first

Terminology and Definitions



com·par·i·son

[kəmˈperəs(ə)n]

noun

1. a consideration or estimate of the similarities or dissimilarities between two things or people:
"they drew a comparison between Gandhi's teaching and that of other teachers" · "the two books invite comparison with one another"

Similar: contrast juxtaposition collation differentiation balancing weighing up

- an analogy:
"perhaps the best comparison is that of seasickness"
- the quality of being similar or equivalent:
"if you want a thrill, there's no comparison to climbing on a truck and going out there on the expressway"

Similar: resemblance likeness similarity similitude

2. grammar
the formation of the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs.

Translate comparison to

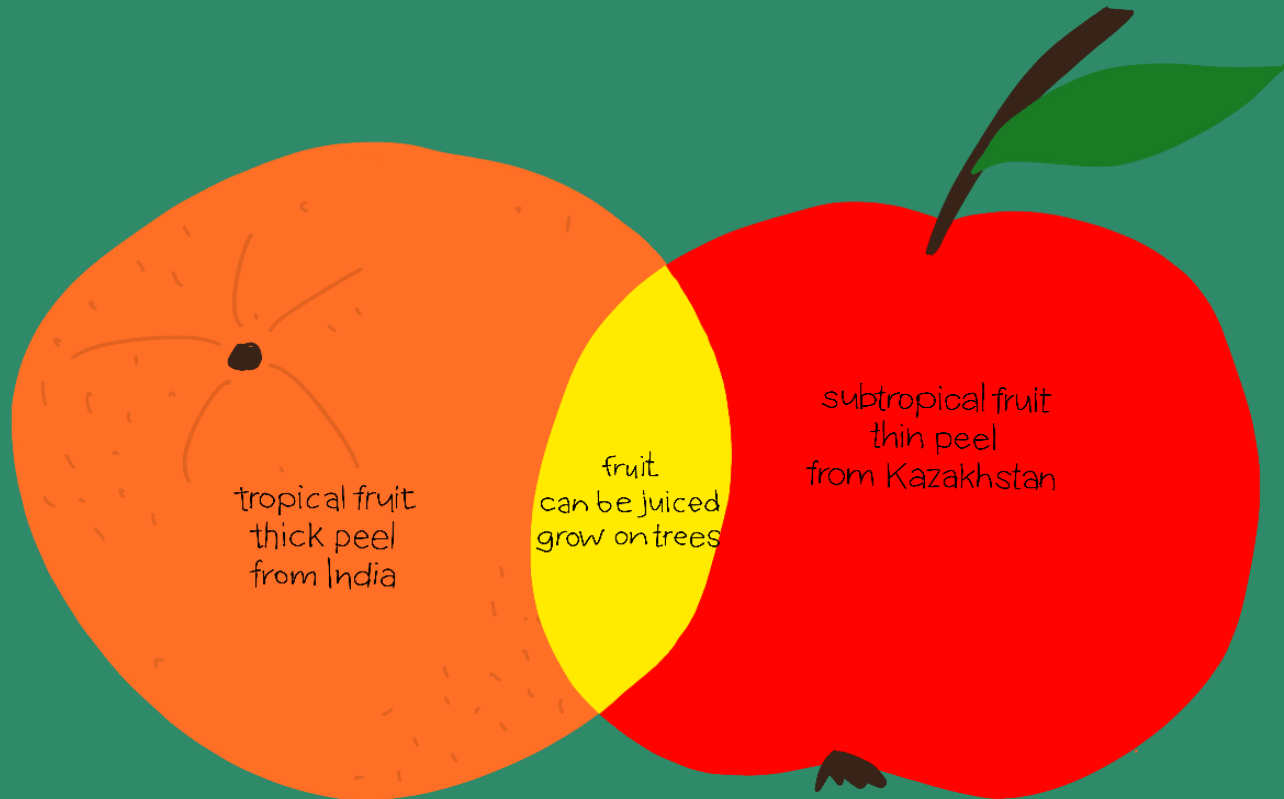
Chinese (Simplified) ▼

NOUN

1. 比较
2. 对比

Word origin

- comes from the Latin word *comparare* – “to pair, match”



Comparison as noun of action

- The – deliberate – **act of comparing** two or more people, things, ideas, phenomena:
 - make a comparison
 - They made a comparison of different cultures' material culture.
 - by comparison with
 - By comparison with the Chinese, the British eat far less rice.
 - in comparison with
 - Lampeter is tiny in comparison with most university towns in China.

Comparison as academic device / method

- ❑ comparison is a broad term for any act of describing the relationship between two things / phenomena or more
- ❑ These things / phenomena (whether people, actions, intangible concepts, places, etc) can be alike or different to any degree
- ❑ Through comparison, a researcher can
 - become aware of and show new connections not have thought of before
 - make an unfamiliar thing more familiar

Further terminology: Comparatist – comparative - comparing

- ❑ The meaning of being (a) COMPARATIST (adjective, noun) is one that uses a COMPARATIVE method (as in the study of literature, study of civilisations, study of phenomena).
- ❑ Within humanities, comparatist aspects include the comparative study of literature, cultural movements, the arts, literary and cultural theory (among others)
- ❑ Researchers should apply a variety of critical, historical, and intertextual methods of analysis

Comparative studies within humanities

- As methods best developed in Literary Studies:
 - **Analogy**
 - umbrella term: any comparison that shows similarities / differences between two things
 - **Juxtaposition**
 - two concepts, characters, ideas, etc., near each other – reader makes comparisons between them and perhaps contrasts them as well (transfer of agency)
 - **Metaphor**
 - Comparing two things without the use of “like” or “as”
 - stress that one thing is another – “My love is an ocean.”
 - **Simile**
 - Comparing two things with the conjunction “like” or “as,” such as “My love was like an ocean.”
 - **Pun**
 - comparison to creative cognitive links in a humorous way - “I’m glad I know sign language, it’s pretty handy.”
 - Difficult to use cross-culturally and across languages
 - **Allegory**
 - extended metaphor – compares the situation in the story to a real-life situation

Comparative studies within humanities

- As methods best developed in Literary Studies:
 - **Analogy**
 - **Juxtaposition**
 - **Metaphor**
 - **Simile**
 - **Pun**
 - **Allegory**

- Because so specifically defined, comparative studies were not seen applicable to other disciplines

Being comparatist – from intra- to transdisciplinarity?



- Where does the comparatist approach fit in?

Being comparatist in discipline focus

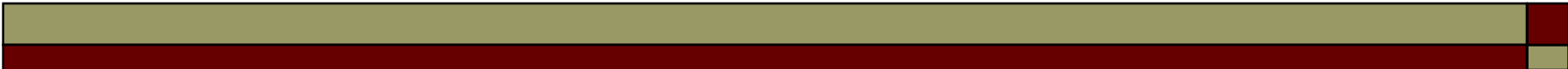


- **Intra** – within one discipline
 - Compare art OK Egypt with art MK Egypt
- **Cross** – viewing of one discipline from perspective of another
 - Art History offering a course in Art of ancient Egypt
- **Multi** – several disciplines, each with a different perspective on a problem or issue (combination of different ideas as solution)
 - Egyptological archaeologists work with archaeologists from Chinese studies and architects to develop best practice to excavate tombs
- **Inter** – integration of several disciplines to a problem by bringing interdependent parts of knowledge into harmonious relationships – holistic interrelationships
 - Egyptology and Chinese Studies = interdisciplinary fields (!) – draw knowledge from several other: archaeology, art history, material culture studies, history, anthropology, philology, linguistic studies, ... → combined thinking, sharing of methods, solutions that cross traditional boundaries
- **Trans** – unity of intellectual frameworks beyond the disciplinary perspectives, involving wider perspective within research + practice, corresponding to different communities, balanced integration of different disciplines to achieve new/better sustained knowledge/skills
 - Katharina's *Museum of Lies* project

Being comparatist in discipline focus



- ❑ **Intra** – Compare art OK Egypt with art MK Egypt
- ❑ **Cross** – Art History offering a course in Art of ancient Egypt
- ❑ **Multi** – Egyptological archaeologists work with archaeologists from Chinese studies and architects to develop best practice to excavate tombs
- ❑ **Inter** – Egyptology and Chinese Studies = interdisciplinary fields (!) – draw knowledge from several other: archaeology, art history, material culture studies, history, anthropology, philology, linguistic studies, ... → combined thinking, sharing of methods, solutions that cross traditional boundaries
- ❑ **Trans** – Katharina's *Museum of Lies* project
- ❑ **Comparatist approaches on each level**



COMPARATIVE RESEARCH METHODS – the research imagination

- ❑ A variety in existence
- ❑ Theoretical orientation + the sources of data makes a study comparative NOT particular techniques
- ❑ All tools available in our disciplines can be used to achieve the goals of comparative research
 - As examples: historical analysis, textual analysis, fieldwork, surveys, and aggregate data analysis
- ❑ Important: (imaginative) choice of data collection strategies

Cyfarthfa Merthyr T

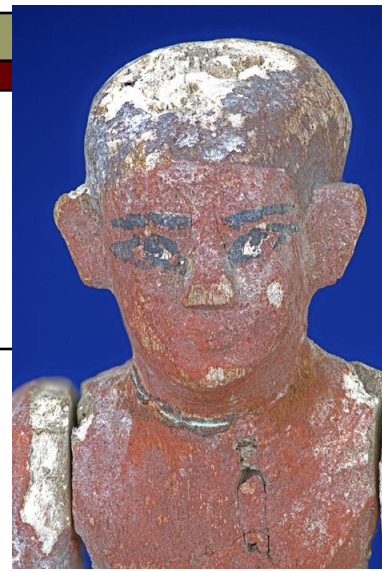


Art Gallery



Cultural (re-)discovery of dormant objects

- **Aim:** bring these objects back to life by creating different simultaneous types of representations (academic outputs, exhibitions, story-telling, *Museum of Lies* including art)
- “unpacking the collection”, to trace the “networks of material and social agency” (Byrne *et al.* 2011)
- in the 21st century as “a storied world” (Ingold 2011: 141–176)



Started as trans-cultural, interdisciplinary and collaborative project

Egyptian artefacts

German Egyptologist

**Welsh heritage
and identity**

Welsh Museum

Heritage with global approach

Forms of interventions of participatory research (2011- 2023) – from interdisciplinarity to transdisciplinarity

The project

- ❑ Collaborative (museum / university) – since 2011
- ❑ Participatory (local schools, communities, students, home-education networks) – since 2012/13
- ❑ Co-productive (students, A-level art students, artists) – since 2015
- ❑ Praxis-led (artist, creative participants) – since 2018

Myself as researcher, Egyptologist, heritage professional

- ❑ Research – since 2011
- ❑ practice-led research: explore practices and see practice as method / conceptual framework to allow artist to incorporate their creativity into research design and as a part of the research output – since 2020

Engaging Education



UCLA | ENCYCLOPEDIA
EGYPTOLOGY
Open



Peer Reviewed

Title:

Execration Ritual

Author:

Muhlestein, Kerry, Brigham Young University

Publication Date:



Rhywbeth i Gnoi Cil Drosto Food for Thought

Adelad Caergaint, Campws Llambed
25/07/15
Canterbury Building, Lampeter Campus

11.00 "Maent yn bwyta i chwydu a chwydu i fwyta"
Dulliau coginio a moesau bwrdd Rhufeinig
(gyda samplau)
Matthew Cobb

12.00 Bwyta fel Eiffiwr
Katharina Zinn

13.00 Pwysigrwydd bod yn wallgof
Luci Attala

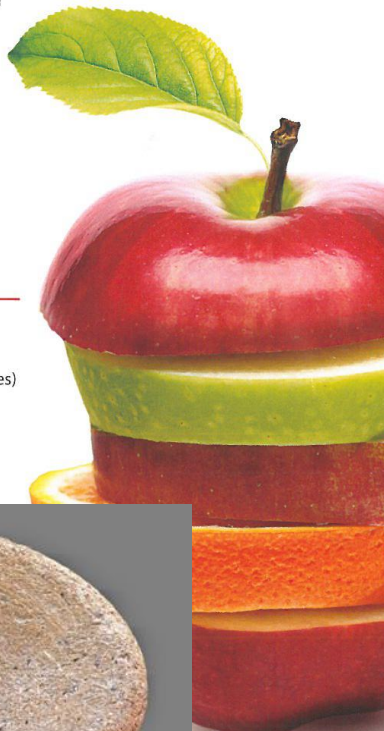
14.00 Bwyd a Chrefydd
Sarah Lewis

11.00 "They eat to vomit and vomit to eat"
Roman table manner and cuisine (with samples)
Matthew Cobb

12.00 Eat like an Egyptian
Katharina Zinn

13.00 The importance of being out of your mind

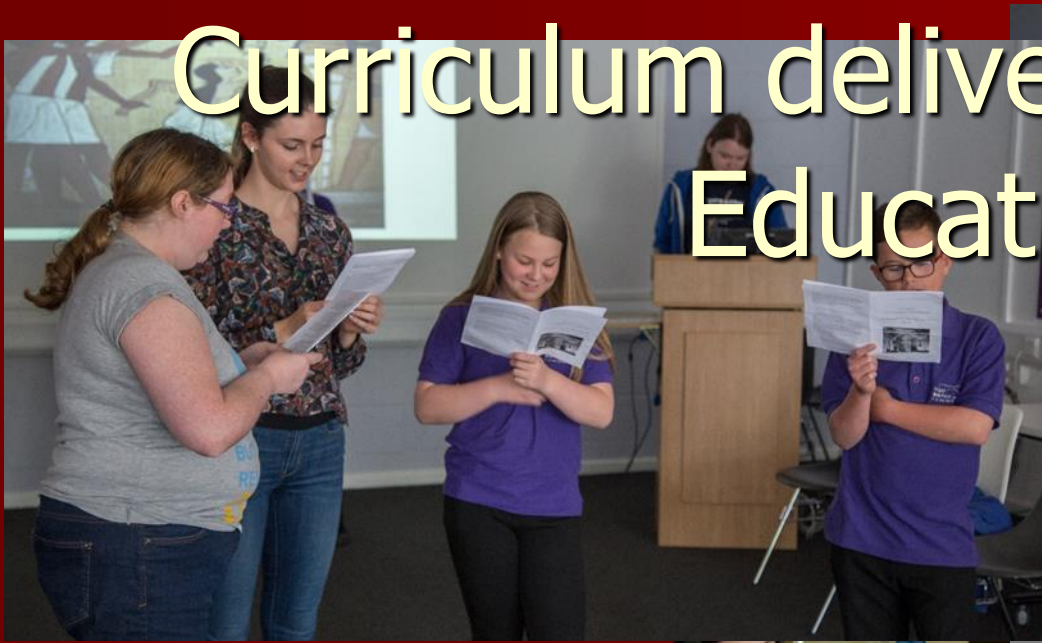
14.00



Outreach as learning ground



Curriculum delivery: Religious Education



ANCIENT EGYPT COMES TO LAMPETER

EXHIBITION OF
ARTEFACTS FROM CYFARTHFA CASTLE
MUSEUM, MERTHYR TYDFIL

"I HAVE FLOWN UP
IN PRIMEVAL TIME"
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN FUNERARY BELIEFS

ENTRY FREE

WHERE

Roderic Bowen Library and Archives,
University of Wales Trinity Saint David

WHEN

24th May—2nd June 2018
Open Mon-Fri 10am - 4pm



EVENTS:

THU 24TH MAY 2018 @ 3PM – ALL WELCOME,
ENTRY FREE

PUBLIC OPENING - WITH
PRESENTATIONS GIVEN BY THE
INVOLVED STUDENTS AND RECEPTION,
ALL WELCOME

FRI, 25TH MAY

WORKSHOP DAY WITH YSGOL BRO PEDR
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN AFTERLIFE
BELIEFS

TUES, 29TH MAY

PUBLIC TALK (DR. KATHARINA ZINN) –
ALL WELCOME, ENTRY FREE

DID YOU SLEEP WELL? – THE BODY,
THE SENSES AND ANCIENT
EGYPTIAN HEADRESTS FROM
CYFARTHFA CASTLE MUSEUM,
MERTHYR TYDFIL

THU, 31ST MAY

WORKSHOP FOR HOME-SCHOOLED
CHILDREN (AGE 10-16) – ENTRY FREE
BUT RESERVATION REQUIRED (RVSP
K.ZINN@UWTS.D.AC.UK)

Sleep like an ancient Egyptian – hear
about sleep in death, try to lie down on an
Egyptian headrest and make a headrest
amulet



Chloe George/Nia Evans

- How much longer do we have to use these for? I think I've made it really clear that I don't like them, especially since my brother and I broke off the stem and used it as a Boomerang. I don't think anyone likes them, Cindy broke the stem of hers and used it as a headband to hold her hair back! Sleeping on concrete is bad enough without these stiff headrests. My back is so, so sore. At least the aliens are coming tomorrow to help build the pyramids. Even Tupac is coming to help! I wonder if he'll bring Biggie?

■ DID YOU SLEEP WELL ON YOUR
HEADREST?—
ANTHROPOLOGICAL
PERSPECTIVES ON AN ANCIENT
EGYPTIAN IMPLEMENT in *Journal
of Ancient Egyptian
Interconnections* 17 (March
2018), 202–219

Creation of a *Museum of Lies*

- collecting fictional stories inspired by objects – creative responses to care for forgotten unprovenanced objects
- Appraisal of artefacts in addition to and beyond scholarly description
- Follows ideas
 - Orhan Pamuk – *The Museum of Innocence*
 - Lügenmuseum* of Richard von Gigantikow

Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Scarab - Rika Zinn

Tutankhamun was born millions of years ago. Tut the boy turned 10, his birthday present was the nokia new who being his father a king of the Severn

entered the temple un saw the little from when it fell shed it in his pocket ther. Tutty is about to throw the Scarab men hell' Tut exclaimed. The genie from Aladdin appeared and slashed of Tut's head with the sword of Narnia. Bye bye! Shrieked The Genie

The Museum of Lies

Interview with artist Julie Davis

"Into the Light"



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vz5yxPYPTU8&feature=youtu.be>

Inscribed Wall Relief (CCM 186.996) – “Souvenir”



Souvenir

Dear hieroglyph here, did he mention you in his letter home, the man who chipped out this picture, not thinking that you are in fact a word? Whilst you preside at whichever tomb or temple he nicked you from, the sentence no longer makes sense, and hasn't done for a hundred years.

You float on a row of "u"s and "n"s: when when when. So many questions unanswered: when did he take you away? When did you arrive in Merneptah's to grace a masterpiece, you who had observed the world from the top of a temple or the gloom of a tomb, guarding your conversations with the dead?

When you look back at us from a glass case in this place of learning, we will stop and listen to what you have to teach us about unexpected journeys, about context, about stillness and change, what it is like to live in the boundary between the desert and the fertile land, to speak through time.

by Samantha Wynne-Rhydderch
lecturer in Creative Writing @CWTSB

22nd April, 2019



Moving Objects?!

Friederike Zinn (participation of Tessa Nicholls), Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, London

- Conceptual dance project
- Exploring the
 - agency of objects: the object and the human – who is what
 - Misplacement / absence



Conceptional art

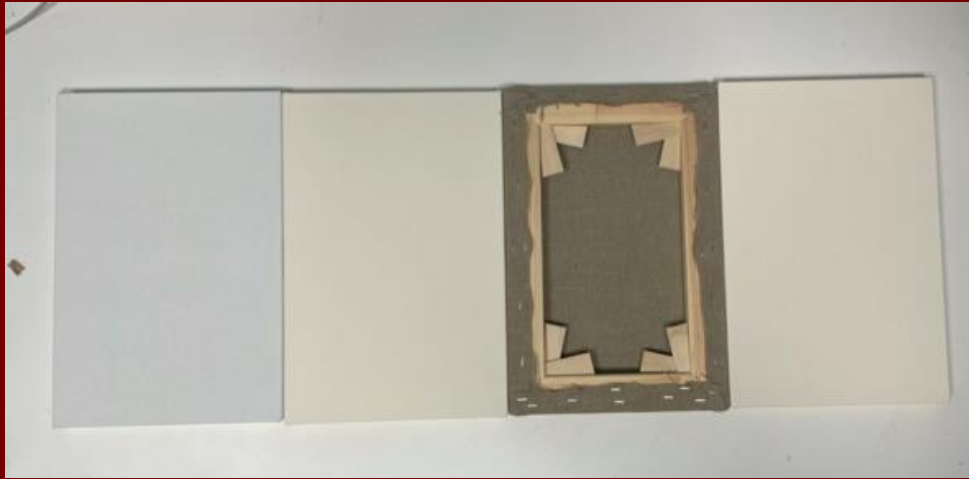


(continue to) move away from the particular object and explore material culture in art more conceptually

- ❑ Art project *Ancient Egypt reborn? Unprovenanced objects, art and emotions III* together with Professor Catrin Webster (artist, academic Aberystwyth University)
- ❑ Continuous series of communication



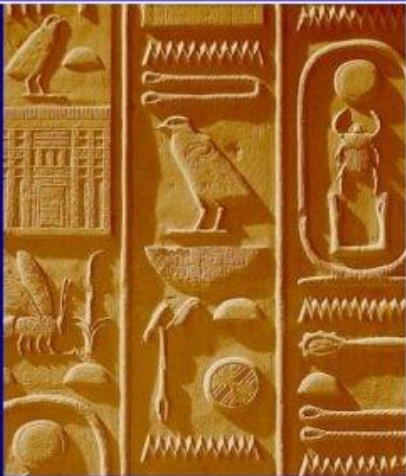
- combining art as language, art to publish ideas
- canvases: to hold objects, but also to express changing and alternative readings of materialities of objects and their understandings, darker canvas responds to inverse character of certain objects (like moulds)



The barcode as indicator of Egyptological knowledge and artistic image – circularity of interdisciplinary work

MIDDLE EGYPTIAN

An Introduction to the Language
and Culture of Hieroglyphs



James P. Allen

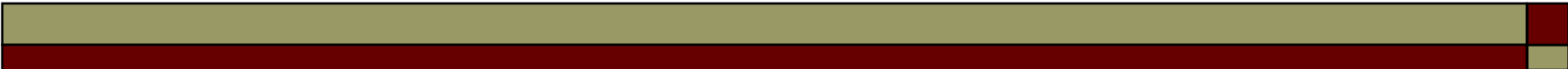
ISBN 978-1-107-66467-8



9 781107 664678 >

'The Ancient Egyptian Language: An Historical Study'
James Allen, 2013, Cambridge University Press



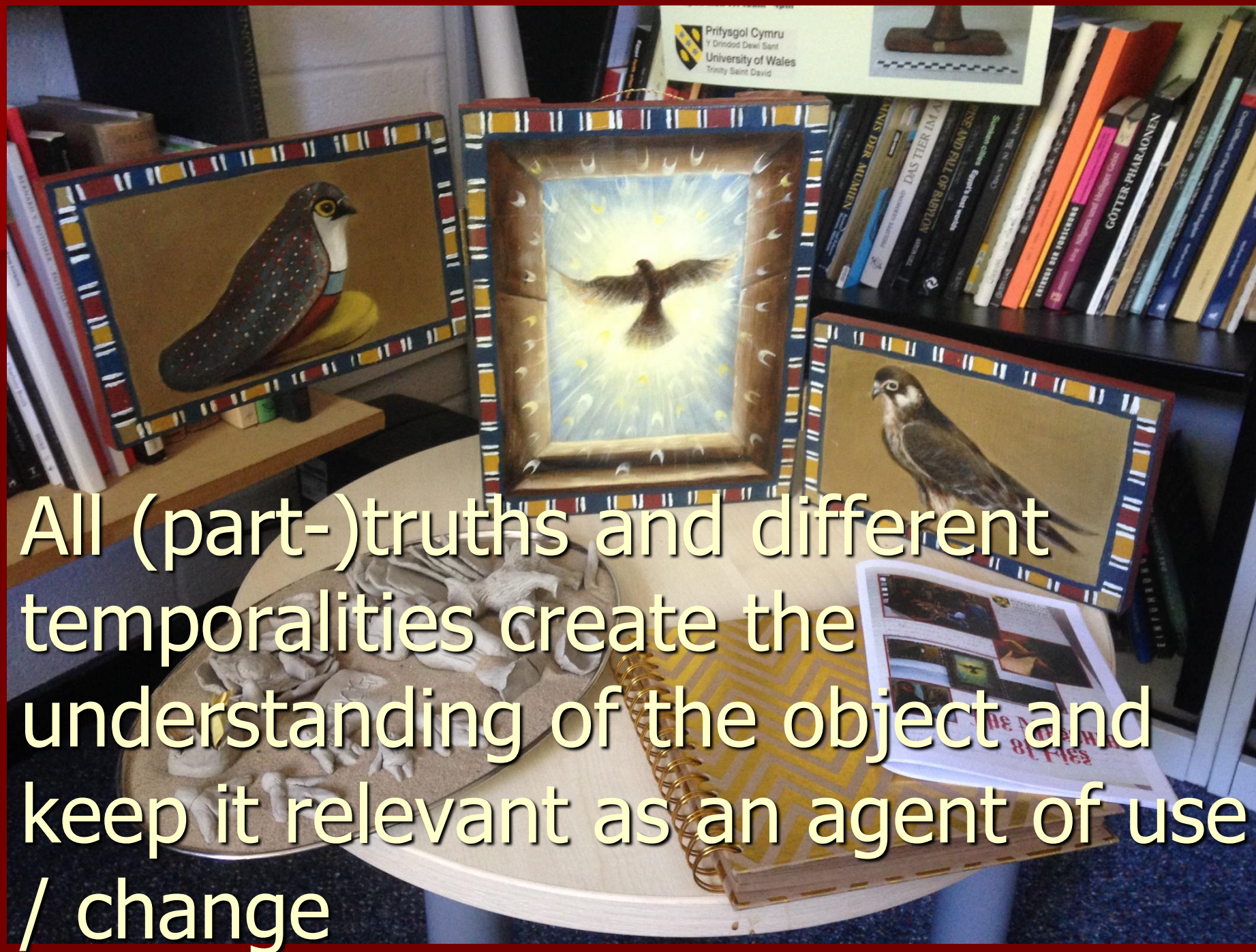


The framework of the *Museum of Lies* - Practice-led and art-based research

- challenges archaeologists' and museums' troubled relationship with truth, authenticity and “the real thing” by focussing on the art in the **artefact**
- Establishes that truth is not opposite to fiction
- Connects to **senses, emotion and cognition** for audience
- Widens the viewpoint of the academic
- framework questions seemingly set boundaries between (following from ANT)
 - tangible object
 - intangible world of relations, context and narratives
- Art narrates BEYOND object's traditional academic biography, highlights the living thing

CREATE YOUR NARRATIVE

- **Heritage Studies** – Welsh, Egyptian and global heritage(s)
- **Archaeology** – secondary excavation, theory
- **Anthropology** – methods and theory
- **Egyptology** – searching for comparative objects
- **Museum Studies** – presenting of objects
- **Memory Studies** – collector, provenance studies
- **Material Culture Studies**
- **Postcolonial Studies** – engagement Egypt/China
- **Art / Performative Art** as creative interpretation
- **Tourism Studies**
- **Education**



All (part-)truths and different temporalities create the understanding of the object and keep it relevant as an agent of use / change

COMPARATIVE RESEARCH METHODS – the research imagination

- ❑ wide divide between quantitative and qualitative approaches in comparative work
- ❑ Most studies are either exclusively qualitative (e.g., individual case studies of a small number of countries) or exclusively quantitative, most often using many cases and a cross-national focus (Ragin, 1991:7)
- ❑ Ideally, increasing numbers of studies in the future will use both traditions
 - Comparative qualitative analysis: analytic technique which combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies → based on methods of agreement/similarity and difference

The study of ancient civilisations

- Comparative study here means
 - studies that include two or more ancient civilisations or cultures
- Problem: comparative work as a distinct category of research is not universally accepted
- precise definition still lacking – but to likely to include studies that are
 - cross-cultural
 - cross-civilisation
 - cross-historical
 - implicitly comparative: examine a single society but make reference (ex- or implicit) to another culture or a theoretically ideal type society

The past in the future

- Comparative aspects of the past often driven heightened by contemporary political ideas / agendas
- Egypt – China
 - Bilateral perspective – new collaboration
 - Western perspective – decolonisation, globalisation, interest in the global south

Artists stage a performance at the 4th Afro-Chinese Arts and Folklore Festival at Philae Temple in Aswan, Egypt, on October 27, 2019. Photo: Xinhua

